

PRESS RELEASE

AUCTION CELEBRATES THE BICENTENARY OF TWO OF BRITAIN'S GREATEST GUN & RIFLE MAKERS



ITEMS made by Boss & Co and Westley Richards – who are both celebrating their 200th anniversary's in 2012 - will be offered by Gavin Gardiner (in association with Sotheby's) in a sale of **Fine Modern and Vintage Sporting Guns and Rifles** on Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at Sotheby's, 34-35 New Bond Street, London.

The auction of more than 270 lots of vintage sporting guns, rifles and shooting accessories, is the only sale of Sporting Guns to be held in the heart of London's Mayfair.

Birmingham-maker Westley Richards and London-based Boss & Co both are represented by significant lots in the sale. A pair of 12-bore boxlock ejector guns by **Westley Richards** (lot 171) featuring the maker's signature 'hand detachable' locks are expected to sell for between £6,000 and £8,000. The mechanism or 'lock' is removable by hand from the main body of the gun, allowing quick replacement in the field if the mechanism should break down [see illustration above].

A similar pair of guns (lot 172) without this feature, but presented to John Ashburner Nix in 1901 are expected to fetch between £5,000 and £7,000. Inscribed "*Presented to John Ashburner Nix Esquire by a*

large number of friends in remembrance of his great services to the Unionist cause in Mid Devon, together with a loving cup and an illuminated album containing the names of the subscribers. The presentation was made by the Hon. W. F. D. Smith, MP at the Market Hall, Newton Abbot, January 24th 1901". John Ashburner Nix was High Sheriff of Sussex in 1911 and had been a great supporter of the Liberal Unionist Cause. The political impact of the Liberal Unionist breakaway marked the end of the long 19th century domination of the Liberal Party of the British political scene. His family seat was Tilgate Mansion, near Crawley and he served as a Major with the 2nd Volunteer Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment. The Hon W.F.D. Smith MP was Conservative MP for The Strand (London) from 1891 to 1910 and was head of the family business W. H. Smith, the well-known newsagent.

A fine 12-bore single trigger sidelock ejector gun by **Boss & Co** carries an estimate of £16,000 to £20,000 (lot 178). Extensively refurbished by the makers in 1988, it remains in a perfect shootable condition and represents the golden age of English shooting. A large collection of Boss & Co related items including gunmakers oil bottles and tools are of further interest in the auction.

A number of cartridge display boards, recently removed from '**The Gunmakers' pub in Marylebone, London**' are included in the sale with estimates ranging from £200 to £12,000. In addition, a good selection of **Vintage revolvers** for the collector of Historic arms are included as well as numerous shooting accessories and gun cases.

Gavin Gardiner is the only specialist firearms auctioneer holding his auctions in the heart of London's West End, where he holds two sales each year as well as his prestigious sale at the Gleneagles Hotel, Scotland in August.

**For further information please contact 01798 875300 or 07831 645551
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